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SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER TUJU & TRADE MINISTER KITUYI
DISCUSS CHINA, AFRICA'S IMAGE AND U.S.-KENYA RELATIONS
WITH SENATOR FEINGOLD

REF: A. NAIROBI 05165
[1](#)B. NAIROBI 05269

[1](#)1. (U) Summary: Foreign Minister Tuju characterized Kenya's growing relations with China as a case of "diversifying our portfolio." Trade Minister Kituyi lauded China's price and quality competitiveness in infrastructure projects. Senator Feingold spoke of the necessity of improving Africa's image in the world and the progress on governance reforms required to make that happen. Finally, the Senator and the ministers discussed U.S.-Kenya relations as regards foreign policy and trade issues and the strong links between the two countries. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) During an hour-long conversation with Senator Feingold and Ambassador Ranneberger, Foreign Minister Rafael Tuju and Trade Minister Mukhisa Kituyi discussed a wide range of topics. Their views on governance issues, Somalia and Iraq are reported in reftels. This final reporting message from that discussion covers China, Africa's image, and U.S.-Kenya relations.

China: We're Diversifying Our Portfolio

[1](#)3. (SBU) Senator Feingold asked the two ministers to comment on China's growing presence in Africa. Tuju said that he was very involved in managing Kenya's relations with China. For him, it is a matter of "diversifying our portfolios of creditors, suppliers and trading partners." He noted that China is a fast rising world power and its world trade is increasing with everyone, not just Africa. "China just placed the largest order ever for Boeing Aircraft. It's Development Bank has more money than the World Bank!" (Note: We are not in a position to validate either statement. End Note.) "We realize that China is motivated by self interest. Who isn't? They want to conquer more markets and secure more resources. We know there is no free lunch. But the allegation that African nations are turning to China for development assistance to avoid governance criteria is ludicrous and false. You can deal with the West without governance criteria as well. Look at Equatorial Guinea!"

[1](#)4. (U) Trade Minister Kituyi added, "We and our consumers know that China and India market sub-standard products, but they are very competitive in infrastructure projects in terms of both quality and price. The Nairobi-Mombasa road is a good example!" (Note: Two long stretches of this road were recently rehabilitated; one by China and one by the EU. Initial reaction to the upgrades are quite positive, but time will tell how the roads stand up to the rains and heavy traffic. End Note.)

Improving Africa's Image in the World

15. (SBU) Senator Feingold spoke of the relatively low status of the Africa subcommittee within the U.S. Senate and his enthusiasm for serving on a subcommittee that some of his peers disdain. He also spoke of the attitude he often hears expressed by his constituents and business leaders. "Isn't it hopeless?" they ask. Feingold stated, "America must learn to think of Africa as a place of hope and progress." To change Africa's image in the world, progress must be achieved in combating terrorism and AIDS, and in ending the continent's conflicts. An important part of changing world attitudes about Africa will be success of a new generation of African leaders in promoting democratic and anti-corruption values.

U.S.-Kenya Relations

16. (SBU) Feingold asked the ministers to identify the two greatest mistakes the U.S. has made in its Africa policy. Kituyi replied, "You were too hesitant in supporting the TFG (Somalia's Transitional Federal Government). You made the error of supporting Somalia's very unpopular warlords on the basis that the enemy of your enemy is your friend. That miscalculation cost us all dearly." He continued "The second major error is your refusal to end cotton subsidies for your farmers. This stance hurts poor farmers in some of the poorest countries in the world and it undermines your pro-competition stance in world trade talks. Your farmers are known to be the most subsidized in the world." (Comment: We suspect that EU farmers deserve that title. End Comment.)

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17. (SBU) Tuju commented, "We value the help of the U.S., especially in combating AIDS and terrorism. We have more areas of convergence than divergence." Tuju continued, "Kenyans immigrate to the U.S. and serve in the U.S. military. That is the greatest possible vote of confidence. Our links to the U.S. are stronger than anywhere else. We are a young democracy and you are our model. Ours is a transitional government, taking the country's politics from a one-party state to multiparty pluralism. We need your understanding and support." RANNEBERGER